

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION

AUGUST 26, 1935



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J. STITT WILSON
TELLS ABOUT THE
PFU SITUATION

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PACIFIC WEEKLY

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CONTENTS

Notes and Comment	85
Teachers Must Not Teach, an editorial	86
Lincoln Steffens Column	87
Plot, by Ellarinsky Winteroffsky	88
Cameo, by Tom Kromer	88
The Santa Monica PFU Convention: Another Version by J. Stitt Wilson	89
Dirty Work at I. L. A. Crossroads, by Peter Goodwin	91
A Trip to a Red Army Camp, by Robert Merriman	92
Too Deep for Tears, verse by Kathleen Morehouse	93
Books	
The Choice Today, by Harry Conover	94
Reviews by Alan Campbell, Ella Winter, James Durant, Karl Wyllis and Karl Long	95
Correspondence	96
Our Contributors	11

NOTES AND COMMENT

US AND THE MASONS

FUNNY how phrases fasten themselves to certain persons and things through continual application. For example, when you hear the word "communism", you instinctively place the word "Russian" in front of it in your mind, just as though Soviet Russia had a corner on communism; just as though there couldn't be, but jolly well is, American communism and French communism and Chinese communism. It's the same with "subversive activities". Whenever we hear the term we think—well, we think of ourselves, or the League Against War and Fascism, or some other force working for the good of mankind. We never, though, raised our thoughts high enough to think of that great and noble organization known as the Masonic order in a mental reaction to the term "subversive activities".

Thus were we shocked this past Sunday to read on the first page of the San Francisco Chronicle these two paragraphs:

With a decree by Wilhelm Frick, Minister of the Interior, Masonry became dead in Nazidom. He called for immediate disbandment of all existing lodges throughout Germany, including the Saar.

Frick acted on a decree issued by the late President von Hindenburg for safeguarding the people of the state, charging the lodges have engaged in "subversive activities". He ordered confiscation of property of all lodges. The step had long been expected.

We had hardly gotten over a shudder as a result of this when we turned to the second page and under a four-column headline announcing "Germany Helps Workers", we read an article by one Henry J. Haskell, telling us how much Herr Hitler is doing for Germany and how much progress is being made in assuring happiness to the people and a bright future for the nation.

We don't know how the Chronicle is going to square these two articles to the satisfaction of the members of the Mason-

ic Lodge on its subscription list but we are glad to divide with the Free and Accepted Masons the calumny of being subversively active.

GOOD FOR THE JOB PRINTER

IT is reported that the *Examiner* and the *Call-Bulletin* are feeling the pressure of the anti-Hearst drive. The boycott, which is being engineered by the League Against Yellow Journalism and aided by the "Hearst Is Against Labor" movement, is making itself felt, particularly in the Bay District. Stamps, issued by the League, bearing the inscription, "I Don't Read Hearst", are appearing with increasing numbers on the backs of envelopes carried through the mail and penetrating into all parts of the state. There is an amusing story being told about these stamps, vouched for by an official of the League. It appears that the order for one million of the stamps in large sheets was placed with a San Francisco job printing shop. When the order was completed and ready for delivery a man arrived at the print shop and presented cash in the amount of \$150 to pay for the job and take delivery. He did. A short time later the League asked for the stamps and were told that they had been called for, paid for, and taken away. Apparently this bit of what may well be called Pyrrhic strategy by a representative of Mr. Hearst cost the San Simon saint \$150—and for nothing. The League ordered another million and saw to it that it took delivery on the order. As we have remarked, the stamps have been selling rapidly and are being used generally.

PFU SENSITIVENESS

IN HIS article in this issue on the PFU convention, J. Stitt Wilson tells of complimenting Upton Sinclair on his defeat for governor last November with the words, "You are the most victorious man in America." J. Stitt Wilson, it should be remembered, has had his own little fling in the past as a "most victorious man". He startled the city of Berkeley some years ago, and surprised the rest of the state, by getting himself elected mayor of the city in a day when even a pinkish color in social and economic ideas was pretty much anathema. And Mr. Wilson had the pinkish color and was very definitely at the time termed a radical who would probably rip up the charter of the city of Berkeley, burn the city hall and put all the bank presidents in jail. He didn't do any of these things and was, in fact, as far as he could go, an unusually good mayor. He discovered, however, that under the system he couldn't go very far. As we remember it, he quit in disgust, giving up the job as impossible.

His article in this issue of PACIFIC WEEKLY announces that he has again quit in disgust, giving up the job on the PFU Committee of 33 as impossible. We are sorry that Mr. Wilson should be so easily disappointed. We are sorry, too, and more so, that he should be quite such a stickler for details as his article indicates. There seems to be a vein of technical resentment running through his paragraphs. It appears, from his article, that he is more concerned with methods than re-

sults. It seems that he had all fixed in his mind just what the PFU convention should do, or rather, what it should not do, and just exactly how it should go about not doing it. One gets the impression from Mr. Wilson's version of the convention activities that the game had to be played strictly according to all the intricacies of parliamentary procedure or it could not be played at all; that things must come out exactly as it had been previously arranged, or they must not come out at all. In other words, that whatever might be in the minds of the delegates to that convention regarding a movement for the general good of mankind in California was to be counseled and directed along the lines of hesitancy, caution and inaction generally. Mr. Wilson appears to think that names mean a great deal; that Epics and Utopians and Fourth Cyclists and Democrats and the like must be able to retain their identity as they move along; that they should not be merged into anything that would have the appearance of a united front for the common good.

As for his attempt to show the Communists in a bad light, he actually makes us admire those gentlemen if for nothing but their persistence. He says of them, "going out the front door, and apparently leaving the convention, they came in the back door, the windows and through the crevices" and continually, persistently, not recognizing defeat, fought for something tangible and of material importance. They tried, it appears both from Mr. Helm's article and Mr. Wilson's, to get these delegates to the PFU convention to take a definite stand. Not for Communism, but for action, definite and full of some kind of hope. Mr. Wilson's words, even more than Mr. Helm's, give us the impression that those ten Communists were the only group in the convention with a definite idea. It may have been a bad idea, but as far as we can interpret the events of that convention, the Communists were not throwing any bombs, or suggesting that anybody else throw them; they were not asking for a seal of approval on their model government in Russia; they were trying to get into the records the vestige of a move for unity on matters which would tend a bit to unravel the social and economic muddle in California. Bad as the Communists may be, or as some people consider them, their efforts toward better things for the rank and file should be accepted on their face value. It is silly to fight a Communist merely because he bears that tag. That is, it is silly for such socially-minded groups as the Epics, Utopians and liberal Democrats to do so.

TEACHERS MUST NOT TEACH

TEACHERS cannot spend their time teaching children any more. They must fight to live, fight for their constitutional rights, fight for the right to teach. The case of Victor Jewett, dismissed from the Eureka Junior High School for his enlightened opinions, is an illustration which must serve as a warning.

For several years the school board, made up of businessmen like George Jacobs who is a sash and door manufacturer, has been trying to find an excuse to fire Jewett. At a meeting of the board of education on July 1 they finally decided to dismiss him on charges of "unprofessional conduct". They did not state in what way his conduct was "unprofessional".

His dismissal is an obvious violation of the state tenure law, since specific charges of unprofessional conduct must be made and verified before May 15 of any year. Jewett received no

regular notice of this dismissal, in fact, last May he signed a contract to teach the school year of 1935-36. The fact that he was no longer considered employed came to his attention through an article he read in a local paper the beginning of last month. Since then he has received no pay.

The *Humboldt Times* of July 2 quotes Joseph T. Glenn, his principal (the same man who wrote a letter of recommendation last October praising him for his fine work) as saying that Jewett was guilty of "unprofessional conduct" and should be dismissed.

Curiously enough, the school board itself recognizes the illegality of its first charges, and is now framing new ones—according to an article in the *Humboldt Standard*, August 15. Here is the article:

NEW CHARGES FILED AGAINST VICTOR JEWETT

Formal complaint was filed with the school board last night by Frank Miller, father of a Eureka high school girl and member of the American Legion, charging Victor Jewett, junior high school teacher, with unprofessional conduct, in that he criticized the United States government, comparing it unfavorably with Russia; that he criticized national characters, such as Abraham Lincoln, and that he had been an active participant in the picket activities of the lumber strike in May and June, and had made an allegedly inflammatory speech.

After reading the complaint the board voted a new suspension of Jewett, because the original suspension, voted six weeks ago, had been declared illegal. Jewett's suspension will be considered permanent within thirty days unless he can show cause why the action should not be taken.

Miss Elinor Cloney and Miss Helen McKeenan both Eureka girls (Jewett isn't considered a Eurekaite since he has lived there only about ten years) were appointed by the board to fill vacancies created by Jewett's dismissal, and Mrs. Glyndon Smith was advanced to the senior high school faculty.

The stupidity and confusion of the article speak for themselves and are in line with the usual Legion methods. Notice that "dismissal" and "suspension" are used interchangeably.

This case is not simply an example of isolated individual

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discrimination, but rather a part of a nation-wide campaign waged by business interests against labor. Teachers ought to recognize this fact or there will be a thousand Jewett cases in California. Funds may be sent to the Teachers Union Defense Committee, P. O. Box 541, Oakland, and letters of protest to the Board of Education, Eureka.

LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

A LAUGHING BOY and his girl from France came driving across the continent at eighty-five miles an hour. Arrived here they turned their car on two wheels, for fun. All this after a long, anxious rest in a hospital from speeding. They're gone now. I asked them why they didn't fly and learned that there is no sense of speed in a plane.

ORGANIZED LABOR—the A. F. of L. has declared for The Constitution. But The Constitution hasn't come out for the A. F. of L. yet.

GOVERNOR GIFFORD PINCHOT, a respecter of forests, warns us that there is a move on to take them from the Department of Agriculture and put them under the Department of the Interior. The good governor, an old friend of President Theodore Roosevelt, is thinking of the forests; he would preserve them. I would save and think of Agriculture. If the forests stay in that department the big business men will bore into it the way they did the Interior, the way the bugs bite the trees.

THE GRAFTERS called big business men are seriously considering hiring Negro scabs to work on the waterfront and so start a "race war" to replace the "class war" they dread in all their pockets. The war cry will still be "peace". How long will it be before we learn that the enemy of society is Business, Private Business. It does the bribing and corrupting of politics, of business, government and the people; it causes wars, depressions, revolutions and strikes. And it makes "peace"—at any price.

MUSSOLINI MUST be threatening some big business interests in Africa that have a pull in England, for the English Government is really concerned about his plans for war in Ethiopia. Not hypocrisy. Business governs the English as it does us, as it does Italy. As I have suggested before, Britain is more corrupted than the United States. The war starting on the Dark Continent is to be a world conflict of the Grafters.

AN EXPERT who knows by experience welcomes the discoveries of gold in Soviet Russia with the pious thought that maybe God is showering such riches on the revolutionists to corrupt them as wealth did him and us. One might answer this hopeful capitalist but not with the culture he knows.

SINCE YOU don't read the Hearst papers, take the *Chronicle* and see if you can see what it is doing—toward going Hitler, for example. And try to determine in your own mind whether they know as well as Hearst does what these two "We's" are doing. They have to do something, you know. They, too, are up against a decision; that old seat on the fence

is uncomfortable. Like all the rest of us they have to make a choice and climb down on one side or the other. The pose of poise is over. No more of that liberal fair-mindedness which has covered up our indecision and mental laziness for years. We—all the we's on newspapers and off—we have to decide and there are Soviet Russia and the Fascist countries to guide us. I think the *Chronicle* will have to lay a plain course as it did in lesser crises like the old graft prosecution, in the world war, and go with the grafters. That decision made and observed in the making, we should notice how they do it. For a newspaper can't hide as its readers do; a newspaper has to dress and undress in public; has to put it into words. Yes, I repeat, read the *Chronicle* and enjoy it. They have started for Hitler and Co. Watch 'em get there. It's not easy; only natural.

BUSINESS HAS achieved an almost solid front against President Roosevelt, who had a sort of a Plan to lift us out of the depression by evolution rather than revolution. The business brains had a hard time getting together; they want such different and conflicting things that they could not plan. But they have united on that; they are against all planning, all brains, even the President's. Brains and planning are un-American. We got into the depression without brains and so must we get out. The use of brains would be revolutionary and when the President applied his mind and hired other educated men to lend theirs to the national crisis the Supreme Court came pretty near to ruling him and his brain trust unconstitutional. But I ask you to note our business brains—so to speak—are proving not only that conscious evolution and economic planning are impossible, unnatural, unbusinesslike and bad politics but, on the positive side, luck and accident will save us.

A baby was born and lived a month or so without a brain, and the doctors said the human child's behavior was Normal. It had normalcy without what the business men declare out of their experience we do not need. As an old liberal I say we should consider that. Maybe we do not need brains. Maybe nature, observing our disuse of brains, has learned a lesson and has begun to produce Republicans and Democrats at birth. And big business men. And presidents. If now we could only get rid of the Reds, who seem to have brains and plans, we might really rise victorious from not only this depression but the others that are sure to come.

As an old politician I would suggest that we all close our eyes and go (ahead) as ever blindly in the blind faith that planning and foresight are unnecessary, unnatural, un-American and have nothing to do with business. Let our political slogan be "No Brains". Or, "No Brains in Politics as in Business As Usual".

THE PRESIDENT is preparing for one of his charming radio addresses to the people that may jar this plan of us business men, but charm and eloquence are un-American, too.

GOOD NEWS: They think they have a way to rid Labor of Bridges and run it as they do the legislatures. Not such good news: they may play up Borah for the nomination for President. Bad news: England is so mad at Mussolini that she may let the Ethiopians have arms to fight Italy with!

A RED WHO is pretty good at business writes me that the depression is over. He is sorry, in a way. In another way, he is glad. Anyway he is getting in on the next boom. This time we will sell out in time and leave our neighbors to hold the bag we are tired of holding now.

PLOT

BY ELLARINSKY WINTEROFFSKY

(Known as Ella Winter, alias Ella Winter)

THE American Legionnaire secretly investigating undercover activities on the Pacific Coast came strolling innocently up my garden path tapping a cigarette. I was spraying roses.

"How do you do?" he said pleasantly.

"Uh," I answered furtively.

"And what," he inquired, wetting his Lucky, "are you doing?"

"Killing—" I began, darkly.

"Ah," he said, his manner changing as in a Hearst paper exposé, and taking out a pencil and sheet of paper headed in large black letters "Secret Report for William Archie Randolph Closson", he stood . . . and smiled at me! "Yes?"

"Bugs," I finished.

"Bugs being your code word for A. F. of L. leaders, no?" he asked. "You know, I'm not a regular reader of your papers, but, of course, I'm extremely sympathetic to the Cause, and I feel we should all—er—well, really dynamite these A. F. of L. leaders, don't you?"

"I was referring to greenfly when I said bugs," I said.

"Don't you feel the Legion goes a bit far?" he said, suddenly changing the subject as in the best Charlie Chan thrillers. "You know, I was once a member but I really felt—"

"Exactly," I said. "You can't think what harm—"

"Yes!" he could hardly stop the jigging of his heart. He cleared his throat and took out another sheet of paper. He wrote a lot on it. He lit another cigarette with trembling fingers. "Yes?" he said. He saw the headlines: "WOMAN RED ADMITS UNDER SEVERE GRILLING BY CLEVER SECRET UNDERCOVER PATRIOT***"

"—aphis do," I said.

"You know that there are a lot of these undercover agents about," he said. "I've always warmly admired you for your pluck and courage and the way you call spades garden tools, but I do think you should be a little careful. You speak so very freely. It is one of your secret—er—I mean your chief charms," he said. "But I know those men. They are suspicious of everything. For your own sake—for your little son, your friends—be a little careful. It's all right with me, of course, because I in my own small way am also trying to Be of Help to Our Cause. But I don't think I'd call them aphis so very—er—well—boldly."

"I was referring to greenfly when I said aphis," I said.

"My name is Pat," he said. "I want to be of Help to you. My real name is Elmer but my secret party name is Pat. So call me that. I want you to trust me. I will carry your secret instructions wherever you wish. Shall I call on George for you? On Jim? Josephine? Jack? Matilda? I am going on a battleship tomorrow. I could take the gold—er—the dynamite . . ."

"He said sulphur was best," I said, nefariously.

"Sulphur—to blow up battleships?" he said.

"To kill aphis," I said.

He strolled down the garden path unconcernedly. Later in the day I ran into him filing reams of telegrams.

He was made Archie Randolph's right hand man after that. His series was called:

BLOODTHIRSTY PAID WOMAN AGENT STIRS UP STRIFE SPREADS DEATH IN PERFECTLY CONTENTED FLOWER FACTORY.

CAMEO

BY TOM KROMER

SHE rented No. 6 on the third floor, back, and she hardly spoke to anyone all the time she was there. She used to go out job hunting in the mornings and stay until almost night, and you could tell by the fagged-out look on her mannish face when she came back that she never had any luck. But then how could she with that outlandish costume she wore, blue serge business suit, a man's blue dress shirt, tie and a pair of brown, low-cut shoes. You've got to wear something soft and womanish if you want to get a job clerking in a store. They like them soft and womanish. She never seemed to eat, and Christ knows what she ate for no one had ever thought to ask if she was hungry. She didn't own anything, excepting of course that frame made out of the strips of copper and bronze, and it was pretty and so was the girl's picture in it for that matter. Mrs. Pink and the hired girl used to go in her room when she was job hunting and look at the picture, and Mrs. Pink used to shake her head for she had read a book once and those mannish clothes and that mannish walk meant something and you can bet your life Mrs. Pink knew what it meant, too.

After they drug her out of the lake and took her to the morgue, it wasn't ten minutes till the picture was gone, and Mrs. Pink didn't waste any time in looking in the hired girl's room and sure enough there it was under the mattress. They had a terrible fight for Mrs. Pink wanted that frame herself and it was her house and you'd think that she had more claim to it than the hired girl, anyway. They were both scratched up pretty bad when the cops got there and they dragged both of them off in the Black Maria. They got five and costs and I don't know who got the frame, but anyway Mrs. Pink or the hired girl didn't get it. It was an awfully pretty frame made out of strips of copper and bronze.



—Eleanor Stone

THE SANTA MONICA PFU CONVENTION: ANOTHER VERSION

BY J. STITT WILSON

CHAIRMAN OF THE CONVENTION

THE ACCOUNT of the Santa Monica PFU Convention (July 19-20-21) by Morris Helm which appeared in PACIFIC WEEKLY of August 5 is intended to convey to readers who were not at the Convention a fairly true picture, so that they may have the correct data for judging further developments in California politics. My contribution to the picture is not intended to be in the way of controversy. It is supplementary. The brief history of the convention given by Mr. Helm at the opening of his article is substantially correct.

Over 850,000 citizens in California voted for Upton Sinclair on November 7, 1934. I wired Sinclair that election night:

"You are the most victorious man in America."

And he was. Starting at scratch in less than one year he performed the most astounding political miracle in American history. He summoned the masses to wrench political power from the hands of their plutocratic masters. It was a raw class-struggle, not in a book or a theory or a platform, but along a whole battle-front. Had Sinclair polled half his vote it would have been a great victory, after the most vicious, lying, dishonorable and undemocratic campaign ever fought in this country since the days of Andrew Jackson.

It was a great political awakening, a vast surge of democracy against the exploiters; the first knock-down, drag-out fight that the common people of California had ever fought on behalf of themselves.

The Sinclair vote came from the workers of all ranks, trade unionists, unemployed, and white-collar folk, many professionals and even from the petty bourgeois. They talked and tramped and read and argued, and worked from door to door, and suffered persecution everywhere. They rose up in their political might to use the agencies and instruments and institutions of our American democracy to take definite steps to end their economic hell. They were not followers of any "ism", but came from all the various camps of radicals, liberals and progressives, many doubtless with very elementary knowledge of economics, naive in the ways of politics and lacking in disciplined unity of strategy. But they were on the march and they fought with hope and desperation. And I say it was a great victory. Not the end, but a magnificent beginning.

It might be noted here, in the light of what is to follow, that the Communists dubbed this movement "another addled egg from the blue buzzard's nest".

Now, this Santa Monica PFU Convention was one more small effort to mobilize and unify these Production-for-Use forces that had become so broken and disintegrated after the election. At the March Convention all the hatchets were buried that had been flying in the post-election controversies and all the elements were present. Forming a Continuation Committee they decided to take one more step toward unifying and consolidating their various groups. And hence, Utopians, Epics, Tradex, Fourth Cycle, Technocrats, Progressive Democrats (no Tory or Merriam Democrats), California Pro-

gressives, Cooperators and units in all these groups that had fought side by side in the campaign pledged to the principle of democracy, to achieve Production-for-Use, were called to the Convention.

It was a doubtful question whether such a gathering could be got together at all and would amount to anything. Though the board of directors of the End Poverty League had pledged their cooperation, Mr. Sinclair at the last moment did not give us his blessing. The Convention Committee, however, hoped for the best against great odds and worked faithfully on.

Properly speaking, the Santa Monica gathering was not a convention. It was rather a conference of persons coming out of all these various groupings. The purpose was to secure delegates from units among all these groups, and meeting in friendly and amicable conference *without the introduction of any possible proposals of further friction or faction*, seek out the ways and means and terms of affiliation by which we might take the next step in a consolidation that might act with authority, for all the bodies thus united.

People who want to know the truth about this Santa Monica Conference, mis-called Convention, should be informed that none of the delegates had any power to pledge even their respective units to any final action, much less to pledge the larger organizations to which they belonged, such as the Epics, Co-operatives, Democratic Party, and so forth.

At one count of the delegates there were, for instance, some 200 party Democrats present, 160 Epics, about 100 Utopians, 250 Fourth Cycle, and so forth. Not one of these groups could pledge their respective organizations to any action or resolution of the Convention. But despite our fears we had this goodly representation of the group forces of democracy, and surely out of friendly counsel and cooperation, and a search for means of larger affiliation and consolidation, we might bury minor differences and non-essentials and secure far-reaching unity among the parent organizations.

Very definitely the Convention was not to be a political convention. The Continuation Committee was not appointed to call delegates to launch a new political party, or a labor party. That is a perfectly proper object for which to call a delegate Convention. Such a convention had just been called in Chicago and had decided to launch a national third party. But that was precisely not the business of the Santa Monica Convention. And the Convention Committee in organizing the committees of the convention definitely and deliberately refused to name a "Committee on Political Action".

No delegate or delegation was given any intimation that they were coming there to create a third party, or a labor party, much less any union with the Communist Party.

There were members of the Convention Committee, and in the March Convention who personally felt that if we could finally unite all such organized forces as we were gathering in conference at Santa Monica, that such a finally united body, consisting of possibly 250,000 militant voters, could authoritatively act as a unit and become a powerful political force,

in whatever manner they eventually might determine.

I may say that that is my own outlook on possible future action. At the way things are breaking up, no one knows what may be ahead of us. All the more reason for the goal of the Santa Monica Convention and make it the organ of such action now.

Does any sane person imagine that some 200 delegates would have come from the Democratic Party clubs to this Convention to launch a Third Party now, or a Labor Party, or form a coalition with the Communist Party? Would 150 Epics have come there with that purpose while Mr. Sinclair was at that moment exploiting his national policy? As for the Utopians and Fourth Cycle delegates, they never dreamed of such a thing, and had they dreamed it, they could but voice it as individuals. They were powerless to speak with any authority for their respective organizations.

But there was one delegation which asked to be seated in the Convention that did come with authority to act for their organization and came with express instructions to use the Convention to create a new political alignment in California, and that was the Communist Party. In the light of Mr. Helm's version of the Convention as mere stage-setting for the exploitation of Communist policy and tactics, this matter needs elucidation.

Two weeks or more before the Convention the Communist Party set their program. They were to propose primarily one thing: that the Convention should form a united front with the Communist Party and issue a call for the creation of a Labor Party, in coalition with the Communist Party. (See *Western Worker*). Delegates were elected accordingly.

Knowing the Communist Party as a militant group and aggressive organization with an intolerant and uncompromising program of its own; knowing well their tactics, and following the March Convention instructions, the Continuation Committee informed the Communists that they could not be seated at Santa Monica.

As Mr. Helm correctly reports, the Communists declared that all they wanted in the Convention was to go along with the delegates on "such matters as problems of the unemployed, vigilante terror, etcetera". That was precisely what they did not want.

They came to the Convention anyway, committee or no committee. Let Mr. Helm tell the story: "Lawrence Ross led his group of ten Communist delegates in solemn procession. (Why solemn, may we ask?) 'Like an emperor,' a young woman delegate whispered in awe. It became apparent that Ross would be a factor." Mr. Helm explains why with precision. He says: "This became more evident when petitions were circulated calling for the Congress to endorse the 'United Front' and to create a Labor Party on that coalition."

So there you have it. As chairman I gave the Communists all the time they could use, especially to Lawrence Ross, inviting him to the speaker's desk. Not one of them mentioned their real and definite program. Mr. Ross, with the Communist Party program in his pocket, spoke only of going along with the Convention in its other programs. The Communists did not come at all for what they said they wanted to come. They came to impose, if possible, upon the Convention their own program according to their instructions as cited above.

Harassed and thwarted from going about its own business in its own way, as Mr. Helm says, "it was the second day before the Convention settled the Communist question". After a prolonged and tedious debate the Convention refused to seat the Communist delegates. The debate and the vote Mr.

Helm calls a "moral victory" for the Communists, whatever the word "moral" may mean in such a context.

But going out of the front door and apparently leaving the Convention, they came in the back door, the windows and through all the crevices, and again Mr. Helm reports quite correctly how they got into action.

He says: "In each caucus it was suggested that volunteers rise to serve on the Committees. What good-hearted Utopian would be so rude as to ask what the volunteers' alliances were? And what bewildered Epic was as fast on his feet as left-wingers? When the Convention met as a whole again the left-wing had representation on all committees and control of two—those on Immediate Issues and on Resolutions".

Exactly. The poor humble unassertive Epics and Utopians and the rest supposed that they had not seated the Communists in their Convention. It is not tragic. It is just funny.

Then what? The Resolutions Committee brings in the Communist Party political program as cited above, including even the proposal to launch the recall on Merriam. The Committee on the Immediate Issues of the Unemployed, amending the action of the Convention Committee, constituted itself a "Committee on Political Action" and brings in the same Communist Resolution. As chairman I declared the latter utterly out of order as an action of the Committee on the Unemployed, and ordered it over to the Committee on Resolutions. The left-wingers challenged the decision of the chair. Another wrangle and the chair was, of course, overwhelmingly endorsed. Finally the resolutions were referred to the Committee of 33.

In the caucuses for the election of this Committee the same tactics prevailed. And when the new Committee of 33 met August 4, the fight began anew. The proponents of the Communist resolution for a "United Front" and for the creation of a Labor Party in coalition with the Communists fought for four hours to make this the policy to be executed by the Committee of 33 as the policy of the Santa Monica Convention!

The vote stood 13 for the Resolution to 17 against. Such a committee pretending to express the will and mandate of the actual forces that created the Santa Monica Convention is absurd and impossible. Deeply as I regretted to be compelled to resign from this Committee, I cannot consent to remain chairman of a committee, which is not one committee but two, where I shall be constantly concerned with such a cleavage on policy and program and action. Nor can I consent to remain a member of such a committee with its irreconcilable differences. Such enforced marriages inevitably spell ultimate divorce.

The proposition of organizing a "Labor Party" in California, or a "Third Party" or a "United Front" with the Communist Party are perfectly proper subjects of debate and action. It may come to pass that conventions may be called to face those issues, with delegates elected accordingly.

I have now discussed the issues raised in *PACIFIC WEEKLY* concerning the PFU Convention. Space will not permit any further consideration of the next steps to be taken by the Santa Monica delegates to attend to their own business and secure united action in the future. That will take care of itself. The Left-wingers should not be over-jubilant at their marvelous ability to create a "United Front". Pyrrhus said, "One more victory like that and I am undone." One more convention invaded as this one was, one more committee seized as this one is, and the Left-wingers—well, we need not finish the aphorism.

DIRTY WORK AT ILA CROSSROADS

BY PETER GOODWIN

SEPTEMBER 30 marks the end of the first year of the agreement that concluded the great 1934 waterfront strike, a year in which labor has had to struggle ceaselessly to retain what it gained from the strike.

September 30 is the day when maritime labor comes to the crossroads. For the gains of 1934 must be preserved, and employers are mustering their mighty forces to turn labor along the road that leads back to ineptness and desuetude.

Moreover, there is dirty work afoot. William J. Lewis, district president of the I. L. A., and A. H. Peterson, district organizer, know full well that they are destined to lose their jobs when I. L. A. rank-and-filers secure autonomy in other ports than San Francisco (and as things are going now, the rank-and-filers will eventually weed out all the old compromising fakers who eat dinner with the employers and think these latter gentlemen are great fellows).

Lewis and Peterson, knowing what they face when their men get control of their own unions, are determined to hold their soft jobs at all costs. They are ready to break the I. L. A. if necessary. They are the "practical men" that employers like.

To that end, Lewis and Peterson have for many months conferred at great length with the Waterfront Employers' Association of San Francisco to devise a way to (1) get rid of Harry Bridges and all other sincere leaders, and (2) render the Maritime Federation of the Pacific impotent.

With Lewis and Peterson and the Waterfront Employers worked Patrick Donoghue, sent to the coast by the Department of Labor to aid in breaking the unions. (Yes, that's true, gentle reader, even though you read in the papers that Donoghue was sent merely to "make a survey" of the labor situation hereabouts.)

These merry men worked out a plan, Donoghue being the genius who formulated most of it. That plan has been and is being followed.

Lewis called a meeting of his I. L. A. district council in Portland. Each Waterfront Employers' Association sent a telegram to the council offering to renew the arbitration agreement if the maritime unions would "keep the agreement"—that is, stop the embargo against British Columbia cargo loaded by scabs and strikebreakers, and stop small strikes aboard individual vessels whose owners are chiseling on the agreement.

The San Francisco employers asked further that the San Francisco I. L. A. local get rid of its "radical" (i. e., efficient and honest) leadership, meaning Harry Bridges.

Then, the district council was to call a coastwide referendum on the employers' requests. But here a slight annoyance entered the picture.

Edward F. McGrady, Assistant Secretary of Labor, called a meeting of coast employers and labor leaders in Washington to "talk the situation over". Incidentally, McGrady said the meeting was called by the Department of Labor, but admitted later that he called it on his own hook at the request of the employers.

At that meeting, Bridges offered to accede to employer demands if the 1935-1936 agreement was signed with the Maritime Federation instead of with the individual unions. The offer was turned down promptly; the employers knew that

they would lose their fight if they recognized the Federation.

As soon as Bridges and Harry Lundeberg, president of the Federation, returned home, a mass meeting of Federation members was called, and the situation explained. Lundeberg and Bridges told the men that the Federation should logically conduct all negotiations and sign all agreements, and announced that the Federation would call a coastwide referendum of its own on the proposition of handling British Columbia "hot" cargo.

Lewis appreciated the significance of this move. He knew that if the Federation turned down the employer offer, he would henceforth be impotent, simply because the whole matter would be out of his hands and in the hands of the honest Federation officials.

But he wasn't stumped. He ordered the I. L. A. men to ignore the Federation ballot, and set the date for his own referendum. The Federation voted during the week ending August 17, but is holding up tabulation of results until the I. L. A. returns are in. The I. L. A. has been voting this week, and ballots are to be in the district office in Portland Monday.

Before we go into Lewis' plans for the future, let us take a look at the two ballots, so that we may judge of the officials who drew them up. Here is the Federation's ballot:

The longshoremen and water transportation workers of Canada have been locked out by their employers, thus making all British Columbia cargo unfair to organized labor.

The Executive Committee of the Maritime Federation of the Pacific Coast now recommends that the membership vote upon the following question:

Are you in favor of handling or transporting any British Columbia unfair cargo?

And here is Lewis's I. L. A. ballot (a long preface detailing the suffering of the employers is deleted because it's all boloney and the longshoremen know it damned well):

The question before the membership of the I. L. A. is: Are you in favor of removing the boycott on British Columbia cargo?

If the Waterfront Employers agree to renew the award for another year and assure us that they will comply with its provisions, are you in favor of renewing the award for another year and assuring the employers that you will comply with its provisions?

That last question deserves to be placed alongside the classic, "Have you stopped beating your wife?" If the longshoremen answer "no" they are placed in the position of saying that they won't keep their agreements at all, whence the righteously indignant employers will shout to the world that agreements with such an outfit are useless! If the longshoremen answer "yes" they agree to stop fighting for their rights and agree that the employers may break contracts with impunity at any time!

That, I should say, is as filthy a sell-out as labor ever saw.

Further, the Lewis ballot offers the men only a choice between last year's agreement and no agreement at all. Lewis, a "labor leader", asks no improvements in conditions, no gains. He doesn't care whether labor goes forward or not. The Federation, on the other hand, asks the employers to

make a better offer (not a worse one), and declines to insult its membership by calling a vote on abandoning previous gains.

Now, we come back to Lewis' magnificent plan.

Any I. L. A. local that votes to continue the British Columbia embargo, or votes to decline the employers' munificent offer, will immediately have its charter yanked. Upon the day of such yanking, Peterson will be handy in the city where the local is located, and, in his capacity as district organizer, will immediately recruit a new I. L. A. under "proper" leadership.

Yes, the Federation officials know of the plan, and so does Bridges. So do most of the men. But the scheme is calculated to succeed in spite of the fact that most of the men involved know exactly what's up! And there is a possibility that it will succeed.

Several hopeful factors must be mentioned. If Lewis gets a "yes" vote on renewing last year's I. L. A. agreement, and

signs it, the other unions in the Maritime Federation can still hold up the parade. Their leaders have not as yet shown sell-out propensities as bad as those of Lewis, and there is a strong probability that they may deal entirely through the Federation. Moreover, the longshoremen will not walk through picket lines, and the Federation will undoubtedly have the help of the I. L. A. men, regardless of an officials' sell-out.

Too, if Lewis and Peterson should attempt to form another I. L. A., the men will balk mightily. The main weakness in the Lewis plan is that the men will have sense enough to stick with their real union and leave the fake union alone. Even if the men did not join the fake union, Federation sailors would undoubtedly refuse to handle their cargo.

Obviously, the situation is tense. Obviously, the future cannot be predicted accurately. One can say only that hope and fear are intermingled. Labor is at the crossroads, and there is dirty work afoot.



A TRIP TO A RED ARMY CAMP

BY ROBERT MERRIMAN

(This is the fifth in a series of "bulletins" being written from Moscow to friends in California by Mr. Merriman who was until going to Soviet Russia a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Economics in the University of California. He is now studying in the Soviet Union on a Newton Booth Traveling Fellowship in Economics. He is a second lieutenant in the United States Officers Reserve. PACIFIC WEEKLY is publishing these bulletins on the suggestion of Mr. Merriman's friends who believe, as we believe, that they will tend to clear the atmosphere through which the world is looking at what many keenly intelligent minds consider an unparalleled social and economic experiment in world history. Unquestionably what is going on in Soviet Russia today makes that nation of supreme interest to friend and foe alike.—Ed.)

THIS excursion was arranged for the best workers from the Stalin Automobile Factory and their families. Programs were printed on which it was proudly announced that transportation was to be taken care of by using their own cars. The "own" had a double meaning; not only were they cars which had been made in the factory but they were cars which had been given to the best workers as premiums, etc. We met in a central building in Moscow where we were served supper while we listened to the welcome address by a rank and file soldier whose rank was equal to that of a corporal in our army. He had been elected by the soldiers themselves to convey the greeting of welcome to us.

We arrived at the camp after dusk after a fifty-mile trip. As we came into the center of the camp we passed hundreds of soldiers who lined the road. They all cheered us and soon the band struck up a lively tune. We went immediately to the central theatre where an entertainment was performed

for our benefit. The theatre was an open one with a built-in stage. On each side of the main section of seats was an elevated section which was also under roof. This section was for the sick, the children and women. The entertainment consisted of old Russian songs and dances, selections by both the band and orchestra, tumbling acts, and recitations. The thing which impressed me was the great number of people drawn into the program at some point or another. I estimated the total number of participants to be about three hundred.

The next morning we got our first view of the camp. It occupied a large area covered by thick forest with occasional clearings. The tents were lined up in the fringe of the trees, according to regiments. The regiments were widely scattered and it was impossible to see them all. This camp is merely the one that is occupied during the summer months, the division being stationed in Moscow during the winter. The officers have little summer cottages scattered in the woods where they live with their families. We were rather amazed to find so many women in an army camp. We were told, however, that inasmuch as it was the day before rest day many of the wives of the regular soldiers had come to spend the week-end with their husbands. This is quite a usual procedure when the distance from Moscow is so great that the soldier would find it difficult to get home and back during the time he is free over the week-end.

In front of each section of tents is the athletic equipment used for one hour every morning. It is more extensive than any I have ever seen and accounts in great part for the splendid physical condition of the men. I have been told that the physical condition of the Red Army men surpasses that of any other army. The next thing which strikes your attention is the large space which is devoted to cultural work.

They have political classes, classes in history, mathematics, art, music, dancing, literature, and others. The classrooms are out under the trees and each one has its slogans and exhibits. Each regiment has its own theatre and a very active theatre group. After talking with a few of the soldiers it can readily be seen that this cultural work results in giving the men something which no other army gives, so far as I know.

Compared to an American camp this camp was informal, not only in regard to its plan but also in the relationship which exists between the officers and their men. They associate quite freely and there is no stiff saluting or jumping to one's feet when an officer comes into the room. At the theatre entertainment the divisional commander came in and the only response was to find him a seat up near the front. It seems fine to see such a relationship in place of the definite caste cleavage which exists between soldiers and officers in America. While many believe that such an attitude results in laxity in times of crisis, what I have seen and what I have heard leads me to believe that the situation in time of duty is extremely well under control.

There is a great deal of talk about the fact that the Soviet Union maintains such a large army. It is true that it is very large and no one realizes better than they do that it is a real drain on their national economy. Not only does the cost mount up, but a still more important fact is that of the withdrawal of all these men from industry, where the need for men is so great. In countries where unemployment is high the army is regarded as a fine place to sidetrack a number of men and keep them under government influence. Here, however, the term of service is short (usually two years) and during the time that a man serves he is given a good education and often receives further training in some trade or craft so that he goes back into industry a better-equipped individual than he was formerly.

In many cases units under military service are sent into areas to help with the harvest. At this camp they grow practically all of their own vegetables during their summer encampment. There are many other cases where they help out in industry and agriculture. As for the necessity for a large army, when one considers the Japanese and German activities and statements, he realizes that actual threats and future plans make it imperative that a large defensive army be maintained. The enormous size of the country and the long borderline require a proportionate army.

We were busy every minute while at the camp. Some of the workers went horseback riding, others did some shooting on the rifle range, others watched the exhibition of cavalry stunts which included a sabre charge. We also saw the light artillery and anti-aircraft guns in action. Lectures gave the workers a chance to examine the soldiers' equipment and to learn the basic principles of army tactics. During odd moments we talked with the soldiers who were as eager to find out about us as we were to find out about them. These soldiers have a better understanding of international affairs than many college professors I have known. The Red Army is not a place where a man stagnates, but a place where he is given a fine physical and intellectual development.

One thing which interested me was my first contact with the traveling printing presses, used rather widely throughout the Soviet Union. Along with us were two large busses which contained printing presses, type, paper and all the materials to print a small newspaper. One of these was a branch of the *Evening Moscow*, one of the three largest papers printed, while the other was a branch of an automobile mag-

azine called *At the Wheel*. These presses ran almost continuously and even issued several editions during the day. They kept abreast of events in the camp and carried articles by workers who gave their impressions of what they were seeing. They printed our greetings to the soldiers and the final editions carried thanks and invitations for the soldiers to visit the Stalin Automobile Plant when they return to Moscow this fall. These small papers added a great deal to the whole visit and the new editions were eagerly received by soldiers and workers alike.

While there were no women troops at this camp there was one woman officer holding a position equal to that of a captain. She was an expert in the repair of artillery and was in charge of the company which did nothing but make these repairs.

The Red Army accomplishes a double purpose. It constantly trains the youth of the country for defense, while at the same time it gives them an education and training which makes them more effective individually and socially. Many receive encouragement which results in their preparation for some higher position in engineering, medicine, etc. All of these factors account for the attitude of the Russian people toward their soldiers and sailors. This attitude is one of respect and comradeship, which affords a striking contrast to the attitude held by most Americans toward their own soldiers and sailors. Practically all the people in the Soviet Union realize that war is just a matter of time, and that it is only by close cooperation and understanding between workers and soldiers that they may successfully defend the gains they have made under their workers' and peasants' government.



TOO DEEP FOR TEARS

GAY red the pair flamed mating across the green leafage.

Presently, presently are the nestlings fledged. And now from four, two stretch cold on the stone porch flags.

One not quite stark—Lazarus, flutter, shudder, LIVE.

These three, worms, water, wine, bring you up perching on the sunny rim of a pint box in the window.

Perching, chirping. And to your frenzied call, your

Feeding Father Flies. Stuffs you with grubs, till darkness.

In the morning, death, actual. Nor this time do we raise you, Lazarus. "Momma, mommy, why? Why, Momma?"

Doctor, Lawyer, Preacher, Thief, you explain it—I said "The Best we knew"—murmured of finite, and infinity.

The childish voice throws at me, grave, vindictive.

"I knew I was infiniter than you—I told you not to

Leave Lazarus there. In the warm kitchen corner, I know he would have lived. You and his careless father let him die."

Scorn, scorn. All birds have flown.

—KATHLEEN MOREHOUSE

BOOKS

THE CHOICE TODAY

BY HARRY CONOVER

WHAT is fascism and what does its development mean for the masses in capitalist countries today? How can it be prevented? It is strange that none of our newspapers answers these questions accurately. Correspondents in fascist countries have given glimpses of the political changes—suppression of civil liberties, abolition of parliamentary government, “purges” of the fascist parties’ ranks—leaving their readers with unsatisfied questions. Commentators in this country have not helped further understanding. Fascism, they commonly explain, is simply the revolt of the middle class, under demagogic leadership, in an attempt through independent political action to extricate itself from the conflict between organized labor and organized capital; or it is said to be the reaction of a nation which never won a major battle (Italy in the World War); or defeat plus the unjust penalties of the Versailles treaty (Germany); others claim that fascism represents the rebirth of an instinctive love for uniformed display. From these, and similar half-truths, our daily press, liberal and conservative, concludes either (1) that fascism represents a spirit alien to the American people and suited only to the temper of the peoples of central Europe or (2) that the issue today is between capitalism, fascism and communism or, more briefly, between dictatorship and democracy.

Fascist maneuvers in America, England and France and their successes in Spain, Austria, Poland, Greece and Mexico have rather shattered such shallow analyses. Many still maintain the illusion, however, that it is possible to keep capitalist democracy and avert dictatorship. Liberals especially cling to this belief; they fail to grasp the economic basis of politics, and so will go on, as one wit has expressed it, merely arguing for freedom of speech until the last tongue is cut out. For the dynamic of capitalist society is to restore and increase the rate of profit. The history of the last century is the history of the effort to widen the market, penetrate undeveloped territories and spread imperialism by peaceful means or violent. It is the history of brutal subjection of natives in Africa, India, China, and Latin America and of warfare between the contending imperialist powers culminating in the first World War. Out of it the central European nations emerged stripped of colonies or left only with the most unproductive. Capitalists in Italy and Germany had therefore to transfer their method of colonial imperialism to the fatherland, to reduce the standard of workers at home to the level of their former colonials. And as the crisis deepens, as America and France and England find they cannot sufficiently boost the rate of profit in their colonies by more exploitation, they, too, transplant their methods of colonial rule to the homeland. Whether individual capitalists are opposed to this method of naked violence and terrorism is immaterial—they adopt it; they must if they are not to surrender to the demands of the workers for bread and shelter.

To meet this demand they have only one weapon, which the farmers of California did not hesitate to use—bloody suppression of workers’ organizations. In this sense fascism is

the ace in the hole of capitalism.

This is the story capitalist newspapers never tell. It is told in the workers’ press which, unfortunately for them, for the most part fails to reach the despairing middle class which constitutes the potential political army of fascism. The four books under review* constitute a source of news which syndicates like the North American Newspaper Alliance might run, if they were interested in a true description of modern Germany in contrast to the commentaries of ununderstanding observers such as Henry Haskell.

Of the four books, Heiden’s is the least acute. Although all are heavily documented accounts of the rise of Nazism, this one deals almost exclusively with the political intrigues of Hitler. The growth of the National Socialist party from the time it was the German Labor Party in Munich, with Hitler as Member Number Seven until the time when, by its seeming anti-capitalist slogans, it had captured the support of peasants and the middle class and been placed in power by the finance capitalists, is traced in scholarly fashion. But the undercurrents of economic change are glossed over and the author, a Social-Democrat, sees only the end of democracy in Germany.

Professor Schuman goes over much the same ground, with far more acumen. Despite a tendency to clog his book with untranslated phrases and to use a semi-Freudian analysis of mob psychology, he makes clear that the movement was financed at its very start by industrialists like Thyssen, who were assured beforehand that the “socialist” phrases were merely for mass consumption and entirely devoid of practical application. This the “radical” Nazis learned in the June purge of 1934, in which 1,186 lost their lives. Schuman gives much new evidence for the story of the Reichstag fire, which the Nazis used as the pretext for the suppression of the Communist party.

The attempt to convince the middle class that the Jews were responsible for their plight is described so that one believes the Marxist contention that anti-semitism must exist in the capitalist framework, where continual scape-goats—Catholics, Masons, etc.—must be found to prevent the masses seeing the real causes of their distress. The low living standards, the expulsion of scientists and artists, the degradation of universities and culture generally are so vividly described that the book has been called biased. The fact is Professor Schuman has made little pretense to such academic “objectivity” as refuses to draw conclusions from overwhelming facts.

Braun’s *Fascism—Make or Break?* is a penetrating study of the economic effects of the Nazi regime. Rather than rely on the bourgeois politicians to do their work, the finance-capitalists, as he names them, have been put in direct control of economic policies of the state. The whole economy has been geared to war preparation resulting in an increase in stock prices of 15 per cent while wages have been lowered a proportionate amount. Industries controlled by the large banking interests have been, logically, the first to show signs of re-

***HISTORY OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM**, by Konrad Heiden. (Alfred A. Knopf) \$4.50

FASCISM AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION, by R. Palme Dutt. (New York: International Publishers) Revised edition \$2.25; popular edition \$1.25.

THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP, by Frederick L. Schuman. (Alfred A. Knopf) \$3

FASCISM—MAKE OR BREAK? by R. Braun. (International Publishers) \$1.50

covery, accomplished by the smashing of unions and inflation of essential food prices. The book should be in the hands of every potential fascist so that he may learn from a German resident precisely what has happened to the peasants and shopkeepers who made themselves the unwitting tools of the very bankers they opposed. It is also a trustworthy answer to the question of why fascism breeds war.

The most important book on economics and politics published in the last year is *Fascism and Social Revolution*. R. Palme Dutt is the editor of the *British Labour Monthly*. He has succeeded, by an excellent choice of quotations from official sources, in showing the role of reformist leaders in handing over their working class followers to the capitalist rulers. Wherever the rank and file of the Social Democrats pressed for a pushing through of the social revolution, their leaders check-mated them or shot them down as in the Berlin Workers' and Soldiers' Council and Bela Kun's Soviet in Hungary, or fled. It is a story of sorry treachery; yet the Second International still blames the Communists for its failure.

Fascism came in Germany and Austria only when the capitalists could no longer count on the reformists to keep their followers in line, a failure which the increasing strength of the Communist party vote showed up plainly, much as the capitalists are counting on the top A. F. of L. leadership in America to oppose militant unionists.

But Dutt's crowning achievement is that he exposes the myth of the corporate state, places fascism in its historical setting and demonstrates amply that there is no alternative to a revolutionary workers' movement to save humanity and carry civilization forward. The choice today is between "barbarism and the return to the Dark Ages; the systematic destruction of all science and culture; racial persecution and torture systems, the return to a system of isolated, self-sufficient warring communities", plus a Second World War—and the overthrow of capitalism. The choice is not between dictatorship and democracy: it is between capitalist "democracy"—the rule of the industrial owners—and the workers' democracy—leading to the creation of a classless society.

A FANTASY OF MUSIC

TIME'S DOOR, by Esther Meynell. (Macmillan Co.) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Alan Campbell)

PIERCING the barrier of time is the underlying theme of Esther Meynell's strangely beautiful novel called *Time's Door*. A fantasy of music and musicians, the story is set mainly in the early part of the nineteenth century in Italy and Germany. In the more realistic portions of the book Mendelssohn, Schumann and Paganini come to life, while the frequent but brief "flash-backs" carry the reader into the daily life of Johann Sebastian Bach. Almost every passage of *Time's Door* bespeaks the author's intense love of Bach and all that he stood for. As in her earlier work, *The Little Chronicle of Magdalena Bach*, the various members of Bach's household are sympathetically portrayed and developed. *Time's Door* is the story of Giovanni Cavatini, a young violinist who consecrates his life to the playing of Bach in those days when Bach had been forgotten, even by musicians. Accompanying his widowed mother to Leipzig, Giovanni visits the "Thomasschule" where Bach once taught, and, alone in Bach's study, Giovanni is transported into the past—into the most intimate hours of Bach's life. One of Giovanni's ances-

tors had studied with Bach, and his letters describing life in the Bach household have been passed on to Giovanni, forming the bridge to his entrance to the past.

Giovanni's exquisite excursions into the past form but a fragmentary part of the book. The interesting events of his daily life are hardly less beautifully told than the "dream sequences". His relations with his mother, Gerda—his teacher, Paganini—and his roguish friend, Amades, would alone be sufficient material for a book. Esther Meynell's descriptions of Leipzig are atmospheric gems. Her book succeeds where so many fantasies have failed—while amazingly delicate and sensitive, it has an undeniable strength and is excellently constructed, moving to a conclusion that should satisfy the reader, whether he be realistically or fantastically inclined.

NOTHING MUCH TOLD

WE TOO ARE DRIFTING, by Gale Wilhelm. (Random House) \$2

(Reviewed by Ella Winter)

WHEN a book is heralded by publishers as being "frank and unashamed" and "dealing delicately with subjects not usually dealt with", its author is done a disservice because the reader comes to it with expectations. If they are met the book is "frankly sensational", and if they are not it is probably dull. This little story of the two loves of a girl artist—sacred and profane—is sensitively told, but there's nothing much told. One affair is ending, and for the greater part of the book another is delicately beginning; but they might be the ending and beginnings of a girl-and-boy affair just as well. At the end one really wonders why the book was written. *The Well of Loneliness* may have been heavy, self-conscious, and too much of a case-history, but at least it did show the essential nature of one invert, described the social circles in which some of these people moved, and the atmospheres they felt themselves up against. In this little book the only character who appears as a real invert is Madeline who is meant to be an unattractive cat but in reality is rather a pathetic figure. The love of Jan for Victoria is a little like the vague and hazy rosy dreams of adolescence.

Miss Wilhelm has a curious trick of describing almost any character at any time as "dark and bright"; she drags in a brother who was hanged, without any seeming integral connexion with the story; the fact is stated and left. The whole story is told in a vacuum; neither the characters nor Berkeley and San Francisco come alive. Why, one wonders, did she write it?

OUR OWN DISGRACE

WHAT SO PROUDLY WE HAILED, by Emile Gauvreau. (Macaulay) \$3.50

(Reviewed by James Durant)

THIS book of text and photographs by the editor of the *New York Daily Mirror*, a Hearst tabloid, approaches the task of describing Russia in a new way for Americans who have been misled by Hearst misinformation. Mr. Gauvreau went to the Soviet Union and saw what every traveler sees: material poverty still (though one photo shows "rivers of oil and packed granaries"), but gay and laughing, healthy and hap-

py boys and girls, working hard, playing hard, swimming, going to sports, parading and singing in the streets. He was, in fact, rather impressed by all that he saw, and he could see the goals not yet achieved in proportion, and not say they spelled the failure of communism.

He returned to find his desk cluttered with photographs of American tabloid news stories: depression, poverty, suicides, sex, nude women, lynching, cabarets, murders, evictions, kidnappings, police slugging workers, sex, gangsters, demagogues and windy politicians, perverts, sex, and the murdered Lindbergh baby. The contrast was too much for him. He put the photographs of America in to serve as a contrast and called the book *What So Proudly We Hailed*. He concludes "something is wrong—the country is all right, and the heritage of America we love, but somewhere the machinery sticks".

Of course, the contrast is statistically absurd; of course, the pictures are "unfairly" chosen. But these are the American pictures and stories regaling millions of Americans, day and evening editions; these form the taste of American culture. The point is not, are there darker sides to Russia and are there brighter sides to America; the point is what is capitalism doing to a glorious country and a pioneer people, and what can a workers' revolution do to save the real America and its glorious heritage?

That point this book makes to the observant reader.

(Mr. Gauvreau has been given a long leave of absence—equivalent to dismissal—by Mr. Hearst.)

THE NEW IDEA

THE SOVIETS AND THE INDIVIDUAL, by Joseph Stalin. (International Publishers, New York) 2¢

(Reviewed by Karl Long)

THIS review we address to the Intellectuals; that is, to those for whom ideas are supposed to be important. Does anyone recall Gorki's description of an intellectual as one who would die for an idea? Here, then, in a speech by Stalin, we present the new idea that has come into the world, the idea of the significance of the individual man. Intellectuals, here is matter for your curiosity and your courage.

The speech itself was delivered to the graduates of the Red Army Academy, to those who are charged with the responsibility of defending the socialist society against imperialism. It calls for increased attention to people; we have conquered the machine, says Stalin, and now we must set out to conquer humanity. We must create a great new people to master our great machines. Well, this is nothing new; any Chamber of Commerce orator could do as well. Where lies the difference?

In one tremendously important thing. The individualism of capitalist culture is predatory: I live, I conquer, I enjoy. To this we add the inevitable corollary: I degenerate, I die. On the other hand, the socialist individualism is co-operative: I work, I build, I triumph. Once, man stole his ego from society; now he contributes himself to his fellows, and (naturally) receives back ten-fold of what he gave. Life is no longer lived insecurely in catch-as-catch-can barbarism, but harmoniously in something resembling civilization. That is why new men are needed; men capable of building the new life, capable of contributing to the great structure of the socialist society. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

The speech closes with a few words which we in America, faced with hunger, fascism and the imminence of war, ought

to take to our hearts and good right arms:

Remember, comrades, that only those cadres are any good who do not fear difficulties, who do not hide from difficulties, but who, on the contrary, go out to meet difficulties, in order to overcome them and eliminate them. We face difficulties indeed. But are we less than our grandfathers of '49?

LANDTAKERS, by Brian Penton. (Farrar & Rinehart) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Karl Wyllis)

AFIRST novel by a young Australian about Australia, *Landtakers* is a grim, grand piece of writing. The author, Brian Penton, has painted a picture of pioneering so vivid that the book develops with photographic clarity.

The story is laid in the '40s, moving around Derek Cabell, young upper-crust Englishman who is engineered off to convict land by a family jealous of even his share in the fortune. Bitter at them, bitter at this scorching, unconquerable country, he determines to make his pile and go back and show them. The country gets him and he never returns. Penton's keen, forceful creation of characters makes every type, convict, ex-convict and free man, stand out with living clarity. *Landtakers* will probably be dubbed an Australian *Cimarron*. If Penton can repeat he will be worth keeping an eye on.

CORRESPONDENCE

APPEAL FROM EPICS

Editor, Pacific Weekly,
Sir:

I am reading much of the Communistic scoffing at EPICS. There is reason and even justification in it. But please, have a little pity on us. We all must go to school from kindergarten on up. We don't know it all overnight. And believe me, a good many of us—I prefer to be one of them—know that real production-for-use can only come in a communistic society.

Evidently, the American working classes have not learned much since the Declaration of Independence. As evidence the sweet tactics of the A. F. of L. and all sorts of sweet phrase organizations and the passing of still sweeter resolutions. Our leaders of today know that they are only in the saddle by the ignorance and stupidity of the working classes. They know that the American worker is not for a fraction conscious of his power. We know that we are still fooled with slogans and promises which the makers do not even for themselves believe to bring to a fulfilment—perhaps even including EPICS—

But please, have a little pity. We are just coming out of our sleep and haven't washed our eyes yet. I, for one, went for EPIC for the simple reason of helping to get Tom Mooney—dear Tom Mooney of the proletarians—out of jail, and

with the slight hope of awakening power consciousness of the working classes.

Please, dear communists, keep on scoffing at EPICS. We know that Karl Marx would be ashamed of us; we know that Lenin would pitifully smile at us. We are so small. We even have courage and intelligence enough to send our men around to houses, armed with a paper, reading: "Good morning, Madam," and then go on asking for old bottles, old tires and the like. Such we call "Rehabilitation".

You see, we are so small, and yet, we want to be so big. Please have a little pity on us. At least for our good and noble intentions. We'll get there bye and bye.

Los Angeles, Calif.

An EPIC Secretary

LIKED "EPIC AND REVOLUTION"

Editor, Pacific Weekly,

Dear Sir:

I have enjoyed each issue of the Pacific Weekly, but I wish to congratulate you particularly upon two recent articles. One of these was "Epic and Revolution". I noted your editorial reference to the divided opinion of your staff regarding this article. The author, in my judgment, made several fundamental observations, every one of which is either unknown, or given insufficient consideration by certain ones of our revolutionary friends. For example; (1) No large number of Americans can be interested in fighting to free Tom Mooney or for the defence of the Soviet Union; (2) great is the power of tradition and whatever social and political changes come in America will be conditioned by our past; and (3) those working for social change must talk a language that people understand. The use of terms familiar to the Russian communist, such as plenum, comintern, etc., is sheer nonsense.

The other article was "Give the Church a Break" by my friend, George Hedley. I am constantly amazed by the ignorance of many of my very bright friends regarding the changes that have come in recent years in the emphasis which some of the churches are giving toward a social interpretation of religion. These friends, to which I have referred, still think and talk of the church as it was when they last attended twenty years ago. Dr. Hedley's article was sound and timely.

Fresno, Calif.

Hubert Phillips

OBJECTS TO MARTIN'S REPORT

Editor, Pacific Weekly,

Sir:

The June 14th issue of the Pacific Weekly containing the article "What Price Democracy" by James Martin has been handed me. This article, to my way of thinking, shows that Mr. Martin is either an ignoramus of facts or deliberately tries to undermine the Epic movement by trying to create lack of confidence in the leadership of Upton Sinclair.

I was at the April meeting when Upton Sinclair called in the executive secretaries of California to plan for the convention held May 17-18-19. As our great Epic leader, we looked to him for guidance and advice and had he not been willing to assume leadership and give us the benefit of mature experience our meeting would often have become involved in endless wranglings and discouragements. The fact that Mr. Sin-

clair did assume some leadership helped to lead us along constructive rather than destructive lines.

Our Epic movement is yet an infant and needs guidance. Certainly no one is more capable of giving that guidance than our founder. In the beginning only Mr. Sinclair knew who in our movement could be trusted. Now we are coming to know those who have proven loyal and efficient and as a result have now advanced to the stage where we can begin to democratically govern our organization. A larger degree of self government will naturally develop more rapidly from now on, but all loyal Epics will surely always want to seek the advice of our great leader, Upton Sinclair.

For Mr. Martin to seek to leave the impression that Upton Sinclair is dictatorial is very unfair. At the meeting of the executive secretaries of the Assembly Districts an important question came up for consideration. Mr. Sinclair and the leaders at headquarters felt that it was important that it should be settled according to their ideas. Many of us from the field (myself included) believed that the problem under consideration should be managed in a different manner. A viva voce vote was called for and one by one we voted our conviction. The matter under consideration was changed to conform with the wishes of the executive secretaries.

To allow articles like the one Mr. Martin has written to appear in print, to my way of thinking, is doing much to retard our progress toward economic security and social justice.

Los Angeles

B. O. Bertelson

Executive secretary of the Epic Clubs
of the 68th Assembly District

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INDEXES for the first and second volumes (combined) of Pacific Weekly will shortly be available to subscribers. Please notify us so that we may know how many to print and they will be enclosed in the magazines of those who want them.

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